

Amendments

1-7. (Cancelled)

8. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for use in a wafer process comprising:
an element; and
a mask including a first shutter, a second shutter, and an actuator for moving the first shutter and second shutter,
a controller, wherein said controller is structured to monitor at least an electrical resistance ~~one property level~~ of the element, further wherein the controller is structured to independently actuate each of the first and second shutter based on the property level.

9. (Original) The apparatus of claim 8 wherein the mask is a dynamic mask.

10. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 9 wherein the controller actuates each of first shutter and second shutter between an open position where the first and second shutter is not covering a portion of the element and a covering position, where the first and second shutter is covering a portion of the element.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 9 wherein the element is a row of a plurality of magneto resistive elements sliced from a wafer.

13. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 12 ~~wherein at least one property level includes electrical resistance, further~~ wherein the controller actuates each of the first shutter and the second shutter between an open position where the at least one of the first and second shutter is not covering a portion of the element, and a covering position where the at least one of the first and second shutter is covering a portion of the element, in response to the electrical resistance associated with that portion of the element being at a predefined value.

14. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13 wherein the first shutter has a width larger than the width of at least one magneto resistive element.

15. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13 wherein the first shutter has a width larger than the width of one magneto resistive element and less than the width of two magneto resistive elements.

16. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13 wherein the first shutter has a width larger than the width of at least two magneto resistive elements.

17. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13 wherein the electrical resistance is measured during the wafer process of ion milling.

18. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 17 wherein the electrical resistance is measured during the wafer process of ion milling and wherein the controller moves at least one of the first shutter and the second shutter over at least one of the magneto resistive elements during the process of ion milling, wherein the first and second shutter have a width to substantially protect the magneto resistive element below the first and second shutter from removal of material when the shutter is placed in a covering position over the magneto resistive element.

19. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein a magneto resistive element selected from the plurality of magneto resistive elements includes a stripe having a stripe height, further wherein the property level measured is related to the stripe height.

20. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for use during a semiconductor fabrication process comprising:

a plurality of targets;

a mask having a plurality of shutters positioned adjacent the plurality of targets; and

controller means for monitoring an electrical property level of the plurality of targets, and independently actuating each of the plurality of shutters based on each of the plurality of targets property level.

21-29 (Cancelled)

30. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for use in a wafer process comprising:

a carrier;

an elongated element held by the carrier; and

a mask including at least one shutter and an actuator for moving the at least one shutter, wherein said mask is used to selectively cover a first portion of the elongated element as the wafer process continues to act on a second portion of the elongated element, the wafer process substantially halting with respect to the first portion of the elongated element; and

a controller, wherein said controller is structured to monitor an electrical property level of the elongated element, further wherein the controller is structured to independently actuate the at least one shutter based on the property level.

31. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 30 wherein the mask is a dynamic mask.

32. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 31 further comprising a controller for the actuator, the controller actuating the at least one shutter between an open position where the at least one shutter is not covering a portion of the elongated element and a covering position where the at least one shutter is covering a portion of the elongated element.

33. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 31 further comprising:

a mechanism for measuring the property level associated with a selected portion of the elongated element and communicating said property to said controller.

34. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 33, wherein the elongated element is a rowbar containing a plurality of magneto resistive elements.

35. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 34 ~~wherein at least one property level includes electrical resistance, further~~ wherein the controller actuates the at least one shutter between an open position, where the at least one shutter is not covering a portion of the elongated element, and a covering position where the at least one shutter is covering a portion of the elongated element, in response to the electrical property level ~~resistance~~ associated with that portion of the elongated element being at a predefined value.

36. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 35, wherein the electrical property level ~~resistance~~ is measured during the wafer process of ion milling.

37. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 36, wherein the electrical property level ~~resistance~~ is measured during the wafer process of ion milling and wherein the controller moves the at least one shutter over the plurality of magneto resistive element during the process of ion milling, wherein the at least one shutter has a width to substantially protect the plurality of magneto resistive element below the at least one shutter from removal of material where the shutter is placed in a covering position of the plurality of magneto resistive element.

38. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 34, wherein at least one magneto resistive element selected from the plurality of magneto resistive elements includes a stripe having a stripe height, the electrical property level ~~resistance~~ measured across the at least one magneto resistive element is related to the stripe height.

39. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for use in a wafer process comprising:

- a carrier;
- an elongated element held by the carrier;
- a mask including at least one shutter and an actuator for moving the at least one shutter, wherein said mask is used to selectively cover a

first portion of the elongated element as the wafer process continues to act on a second portion of the elongated element, the wafer process substantially halting with respect to the first portion of the elongated element; and

a controller for the actuator, the controller actuating the at least one shutter between an open position where the at least one shutter is not covering a portion of the elongated element, and a covering position where the at least one shutter is covering the portion of the elongated element, in response to a monitored electrical resistance ~~property-level~~ associated with the portion of the elongated element being at a predefined value.

40. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 39 wherein the mask is a dynamic mask.

41. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 39, further comprising a mechanism for measuring the electrical resistance ~~property-level~~ associated with a selected portion of the elongated element and communicating said electrical resistance ~~property-level~~ to said controller.

42. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 39, wherein the elongated element is a rowbar containing a plurality of magneto resistive elements.

43. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 39 ~~wherein the property-level includes electrical resistance, further~~ wherein the controller actuates the at least one shutter between an open position where the at least one shutter is not covering a portion of the elongated element, and a covering position where the at least one shutter is covering a portion of the elongated element, in response to the electrical resistance associated with that portion of the elongated element being at a predefined value.

44. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the electrical resistance is measured during the wafer process of ion milling.

45. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 44, wherein the controller moves the at least one shutter over the at least one magneto resistive element during the process of ion milling, wherein the at least one shutter has a width to substantially protect the elongated element below the at least one shutter from removal of material where the shutter is placed in a covering position of the elongated element.

46. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 43, wherein the elongated element is a magneto resistive element wherein said ~~magneto-resistive~~elongated elements includes a stripe having a stripe height, further wherein the electrical resistance measured across the ~~magneto-resistive~~ elongated element is related to the stripe height.